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ABSTRACT

Students who traveled to the United States to study ("student sojourners") were asked in a study to describe their initial expectations of teacher communication. Three research questions were probed: (1) Do student sojourners have articulated expectations and norms for teacher communication? (2) Do student sojourners experience violations of their expectations for teacher communication? (3) How do student sojourners respond to violations of their expectations for teacher communication? Ten sojourners (four females and six males) from Canada, China, Croatia, Finland, Germany, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Poland, and Taiwan participated. Results showed that student sojourners' expectations did play a role in their experiences in the United States. However, it was not their expectations for teacher communication that were critical. In response to question one, students felt more concerned about expectations of themselves than of their teachers. In response to question two, students said they did feel "violated" but they attributed such feelings to unmet expectations for self or for some relationship. In response to question three, students did not make any comments about how a teacher should communicate. They seemed to take a case-by-case approach for assessing teachers. (Contains 25 references.) (TB)

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How Sojourner Students Cope:
When Perceptions of Teachers Don't Match Expectations

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Abstract

Students who traveled to the United States to study, student sojourners, were asked to describe their experiences as students in United States classrooms. Specifically, sojourners' initial expectations for teachers' communication were explored, including violations of expectations and strategies for coping with violations. Sojourners did not articulate many initial expectations, nor did they recollect having classroom expectations as something with which they were primarily concerned. As they began their United States studies, sojourners' primary concerns had to do with managing their multiple contexts and surviving their transition losses.

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How Sojourner Students Cope:

When Perceptions of Teachers Don't Match Expectations

Speech communication researchers who have been interested in instructional contexts have examined the link between communication variables and student achievement. Much of their research has corresponded with a process-product paradigm, within which the "[teacher] effectiveness question [was] formulated in terms of relationships between measures of teacher classroom behaviors (processes) and measures of student learning outcomes (products)" (Doyle, 1978, p. 165). A synthesis of published research of *communication education* and *instructional communication* (Staton-Spicer & Wulff, 1984) described a multitude of communication variables and relationships among variables. While this research synthesis indicated that characteristics of teachers and students influenced student achievement, some would conclude that research has "demonstrated that *teachers* are pivotal to student perceptions of learning" (West, 1994, p. 109, emphasis added). However, a question of "pivotal" influence remains unresolved and so prompts continued inquiries, such as: (a) what do students contribute to their own perceptions of learning, and (b) to what extent does the *communication education* and *instructional communication* research apply to all students?

One potential student contribution could be students' expectations for teachers' communication behaviors. Burgoon and Walther (1990) argue that expectancy underlies most communication theorizing. For example, schema, script, and uncertainty reduction theories each address a communicator's attempts to anticipate behavior--to establish what might be expected from Self or some Other. "Communication expectancies are cognitions about the anticipated communication behavior of specific others, as embedded within and shaped by the social norms for the contemporaneous roles, relationships, and context" (p. 236). As social norms are particular to some group, so are expectations linked to a group. That is to say, expectations for some specific Other would be qualified by a specification of some shared context. For example, a student's expectations for

Teacher could vary according to grade level, subject, school, and so forth, and would be contingent upon the shared social norms of a student and a teacher, within a particular class.

Burgoon and Walther separate expectation from evaluation by distinguishing between predicted behaviors and ideal behaviors. Predicting a behavior says nothing about whether a behavior is preferred or valuable (ideal)--prediction involves no evaluation. Rather, evaluation comes with an individual's assessment of a behavior that deviates from that which was expected. Assessment standards include both social norms and individual preference. Continuing with the example above, a student could evaluate teacher behavior that deviated from student expectations by comparing the behavior to their shared class norms and to the student's ideal for teacher behavior.

Burgoon and Hale's (1988) review of research on nonverbal communication expectancy violations demonstrates the potential for both positive and negative evaluations of behavior that deviates from expectations. Researchers found that people assessed nonverbal violations by degree, direction, and violator. Positive ratings were given to nonverbal behaviors that were better than expected, or to nonverbal violations that were committed by favored persons. Positive ratings were linked to favorable communication patterns and consequences. Negative ratings were given to nonverbal behaviors that were worse than expected, or to nonverbal violations that were committed by disfavored persons. Negative ratings were linked to unfavorable communication patterns and consequences. The research on violations of nonverbal expectations suggests that violations of verbal expectations also might be evaluated either positively or negatively.

As a component of teacher-student communication, expectations potentially influcnce communication patterns and consequences, such as student achievement. Whether students and teachers can enjoy successful communication may depend upon their meeting one another's expectations for communication. As expectations are

contingent upon shared norms, if students and teachers do not share classroom communication norms, then their communication expectations may not be met. Violations of expectations might be evaluated negatively and be associated with negative communication patterns and outcomes. The relationships among expectations, shared norms, and communication outcomes warrant investigation in the context of the classroom.

The contingency of shared norms leads to the second question posed earlier: to what extent does the extant instructional communication research apply to all students? If expectations influence communication outcomes, and if expectations are contingent upon shared norms, then the extant research that shows positive correlations between communication variables and student outcomes must involve teachers and students who share communication norms.

Some instructional communication researchers (see, for example, Collier & Powell, 1990; Powell & Harville, 1990; Sanders & Wiseman, 1990) address questions related to shared norms. These researchers note the standard subject populations of much of the extant instructional communication research--teachers and students of United States colleges--and question whether a factor of homogeneity of teachers and students has been considered. Consequently, they design studies that consider variables such as *student ethnicity* or *culture* when assessing the effectiveness of teacher communication behaviors.

Sanders and Wiseman (1990) asked whether teacher immediacy behaviors were consistently related to "White, Asian, Hispanic, and Black" (p. 341) students' perceptions of their own cognitive, affective, and behavioral learning. They found that "while immediacy appears to be positively associated with learning for all groups, the levels of association vary" (p. 349). Powell and Harville (1990) investigated "the effects of teacher clarity and verbal and nonverbal immediacy in multicultural classroom environments. Overall the results indicated that verbal and nonverbal immediacy were

related to teacher clarity [but that] the strength of this association varied by ethnic group" (p. 375). Collier and Powell (1990) investigated the relationships among teacher immediacy, teaching effectiveness, and course utility, for students of different ethnic groups, across time. They offered conclusions that included: (a) classrooms are complex systems having evolutionary changes, some of which are related to teacher communication behavior and some to other variables, (b) students from different ethnic groups may perceive and respond to different turning points in the classroom, (c) immediacy serves different functions for students from different ethnic backgrounds, at different times in the course (p. 147). In her review of instructional research at elementary and secondary levels, Hollins (1993) similarly noted findings of teaching and learning differences related to United States' cultural (or, subcultural) variations.

Studies such as the ones noted above consider differences among student groups within the United States. They incorporate variables such as *culture* or *ethnicity* to delimit the groups. An underlying assumption of each study is that members of an identified group share norms, or standards, for behavior. Intercultural communication scholars (see, for example, Dodd, 1982; Klopf, 1991; Porter & Samovar, 1991) argue that members of a culture do share norms. An extension of the studies noted above would be to consider differences among students from ethnic[1] groups outside the United States.

Students in different countries often have differing social, communication, teaching, and learning norms (Andersen and Powell, 1991). Thus, students from other countries who travel to the United States to study, *student sojourners*, could easily have a) expectations for teachers' communication that are based on sojourners' home norms, and b) assessment standards for expectancy violations that are based on sojourners' home

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[1] *Ethnicity* has been used to refer to race, national origin, and/or culture. In this paper, it refers to country of origin. While *culture* and *country* are not synonymous, a national boundary often coincides with a cultural boundary, due to cultural elements such as language and shared history (Samovar, Porter, & Jain, 1981).

norms. If student sojourners spent any time at all trying to imagine what their time in the United States would be like, then they likely brought their expectations to a somewhat conscious level. The purpose of the study reported here was to address research questions concerning the communication expectations of recently arrived student sojourners:

R1 - Do student sojourners have articulated expectations and norms for teacher communication?

R2 - Do student sojourners experience violations of their expectations for teacher communication?

R3 - How do student sojourners respond to violations of their expectations for teacher communication?

Method

The Research Setting

The study took place at a large, Northwest university, during a summer session when the student population was at low ebb. As the study focused on student sojourners, who were located in a scattering of summer classes, interviews with individual sojourners were conducted outside of classroom settings.

Procedures for Data Collection

The director of the University's "International Student Orientation Program" helped to recruit participants for this study. The director provided a list of sojourners who had participated in the prior year's orientation and who were at the University for summer classes. From the list, seven sojourners (two females and five males) agreed to participate in the study. Three additional student sojourners (two females and one male) were recruited through other referrals. They came from different countries: Canada, China, Croatia, Finland, Germany, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Poland, and Taiwan. Their ages ranged from twenty to twenty-five years. They studied within a variety of disciplines, five at the undergraduate level and five at the graduate level. Most of these

sojourners had been in the United States for one to two years. Two of them had arrived during their high school years and had just completed their fourth years in the United States.

The sojourners individually participated in unstructured interviews (Lofland & Lofland, 1984), most of which were face-to-face. Two of them interviewed through the medium of electronic mail (computer), exchanging numerous messages with the researcher. The interviews began with inquiries about the sojourners' experiences in their homeland classes, and then moved on to inquiries about their initial United States classroom experiences. The researcher hoped to elicit sojourners' initial perceptions of teacher communication, initial expectations for teacher communication, and recollections of being cognizant of such expectations as they began their studies in the United States. The potential for sojourner suggestibility made the explicit questioning about expectations and violations a last resort. When a sojourner's account provided scant demographic details, direct questions were posed.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the interviews were analyzed inductively. Explicit statements about expectations were examined and grouped into categories of similarity. Statements about "surprises," "upsets," "disappointments," and "puzzles" were analyzed for their implied expectations, as well as for evaluations of violations. Any statements related to coping with violations were similarly categorized. Finally, other issues introduced by the sojourners were evaluated for recurrent themes.

Results

The results of this study need to be prefaced with an issue raised by the sojourners. By the end of the interviews, several categories had emerged, one of which was not related to "expectations for teacher communication." These student sojourners had not been primarily concerned with their classroom experiences. In fact, much of the sojourners' accounts were taken up with details of contexts and experiences outside of the

classroom. They were clearly aware of being situated in multiple, interrelated contexts. They seemed to implicitly recognize that their experiences within one context influenced their experiences in other contexts. It was as if they had been asked, *Tell me what it is like being a student in the United States?* and had responded, *I will tell you what it is like being a whole person in the United States.*

While the study results included some data about student expectations for teachers and communication, the results need to be qualified by noting that students had other, pressing concerns upon their arrival in the United States. The expectation-for-teacher data will be reported first, and then the sojourners' primary concerns will be described.

Expectation for Teacher Data

Source of expectations. Sojourners reported two sources for their expectations for United States classrooms. First, other sojourners provided accounts of their United States experiences, both in written form and in person. One of the students who arrived during high school had been given books and pamphlets about being an "exchange student in the United States." Having read the material given to him, he expected the classroom to be run autocratically, "British-like...ceremonial.... you say the pledge of allegiance every day, you have to have permission (hall-passes) to go out of the room...." Others consulted with fellow sojourners after their arrival in the United States. For example, the student from China reported that she would ask other Chinese students to tell her about some professor before she would register for a class with that professor.

A second source for sojourners' expectations was the mass media. When describing how she expected a teacher to look, the Croatian student said, "I though he would be young, casual, in jeans--you know, like out of a Miller Draft commercial."

Other sojourners mentioned favorite television programs or movies and said that they thought Americans[2] looked something like actors.

Expectations for teacher communication. Although not all sojourners articulated expectations specific to communication, those who did mentioned the quality of explicitness. Sojourners expected United States teachers to be explicit and reported that many of their teachers were not. "Nobody talks here--things remain unspoken," said the student from Croatia. She wanted teachers to give more detailed explanations and specific feedback. The Mexican student avoided addressing one teacher for an entire quarter because the teacher had failed to say how he should be addressed (by title? first name?). The Chinese student reported struggling through a lecture class: "I was always lost--I didn't know when the teacher moved on--he never said where he was in the chapter." Another of her teachers assigned a variety of readings, but did not mention that the readings presented opposing opinions. She spent some confusing hours trying to reconcile the readings and doubting her facility with the English language. The Malaysian student recommended that teachers learn to ask sojourners explicitly how they are faring and what they need to improve their learning. If teachers would learn to ask straightforward questions, then teachers could better help students. Lastly, the Finnish student reported that he waited an entire quarter for one teacher to put "all those details into a big picture." He expected the teacher to make some explicit links and to pull the lessons all together--but those links were left at an implicit level. Even a comprehensive final exam would have helped him to create a big picture (he had not been given any comprehensive exams since he arrived in the United States).

In each instance, when a sojourner talked about expecting explicit communication from teachers, s/he noted that teachers failed to meet this expectation.

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[2] The term *American* applies to a variety of countries, across three continents. It is used in this paper to refer to those from the United States when so used by study participants.

Sojourners negatively evaluated such expectation violations. They noted that when communication was vague, they had trouble understanding and had to work harder. The sojourners rarely went to a teacher for clarification. Instead, they muddled through on their own or talked with fellow sojourners.

Expectations for teacher-student relationship. Sojourners described a range of expectations for their relationships with teachers, from formal to informal. At the formal end of the range, three sojourners expected teachers to hold positions of authority over students and to be respected by students. Teachers should act authoritatively, such as reprimanding students for disrespectful classroom behaviors: sitting with feet up on desks, sleeping during lecture, eating and drinking and burping in class, or arriving late for class and leaving early. At the informal end of the range, two sojourners anticipated friendship with teachers. Whether in formal or informal relationships with their teachers, sojourners expected teachers to treat them fairly, as competent learners, and to be flexible and understanding of sojourners' circumstances.

Sojourners' expectations for their relationships with teachers were fulfilled by some teachers, and not fulfilled by others. They negatively evaluated a violation of expectations when the ideals of "fair" and "competent" were involved, such as when teachers chose to be authoritarian and inflexible about deadlines, mandatory attendance, assignments, or ideas. Only one sojourner reported challenging teachers' claimed authority. During her high school year, when teachers talked too loudly while students tried to write an exam, the Croatian student told the teachers to talk out in the hall. She also argued with a teacher about socialism and communism, defending her opinions by claiming "lived experience." Now in college, she sees herself as having become more passive and quiet in her teacher-student interactions.

Sojourners generally, however, reported that they deferred to their teachers' relationship requirements. They simply dismissed their own expectations as uninformed and not useful. For example, the Finnish student noted, "I'm used to independent study,

self-discipline, self-paced work. But here, I don't dare skip. Teachers treat you like you're dependent on them--they think you can only learn if you're in class with them. I do what they want."

A Case Study of Classroom Expectations. The Malaysian student shared many insights about his experiences in the United States. First, he expected to do as well with United States classes as he had done with his homeland classes.

> Back in Malaysia, I always get 4.0 in most of my classes....my first grade report in UW was bad. My grades were 3.5, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7. I know those grades were not bad, but to me, I was getting *stupider*.

He described learning, at home, as a "passive type" that required students to listen and absorb everything a teacher said--right or wrong. He discovered that learning in the United States required his active communication.

> In US, the students communicate his or her opinions to the lecturers and debate. It is hard for the Asian students to adjust, as least for me. But, I am talking more and more each day in class (I can't help it cos there are points in class participation).

A consequence of adjusting to United States classroom communication requirements was that he saw himself talking like an American.

> I bet, if I stay here more than 10 year, I will behave like a typical American--individualistic, direct....I am very direct nowadays. If I don't think something is right, I will just voice out my feeling. Though it is good to express your feeling, but most of the time, I am being too direct and aggressive, I become very rude.

He pointed to values as underlying his behavioral (i.e., communication) choices. He felt compelled to adopt American values, while he was in the United States.

> The only way to stay in US, yet not being influence by US values is totally isolate yourself from the society, which is quite impossible. I mean, I expose to TV and other media every day. The longer I stay here, the more US values I will pick up. Sometimes, it is not up to my choice actually. I just pick up those values automatically.

He did not intend, however, to stay in the United States.

> Eventually I will go back to Malaysia and spend the rest of my life there. There are a few reasons why I don't want to stay here, even though I love this country so much.... (#5) I don't appreciate American values. I might be prejudice, but somehow, I think the Asian values are better in overall. Though I have only been here for a year, I have picked up some American culture and values which I don't think is good.

The case study presented above does not intend to represent all of the sojourners who participated in this study. It does sketch a profile of a particularly articulate, insightful sojourner. As well, it raises some issues relevant to an understanding of sojourner students' experiences in the United States. Additional issues were raised by the various sojourners, as described next.

Sojourners' Primary Concerns

These sojourners offered many anecdotes of their arrival and settling-in periods. Even though their motivation for travel to the United States came from education goals, their immediate concerns upon arrival decreased the priority of education. For example, safety was an initial concern:

> When I first arrived here, I felt insecure and scared. (Malaysian student)
>
> I found my school was actually a dangerous place. (Croatian student)
>
> I wondered if I would be safe here, or if I would be killed. (Taiwanese student)

Finding a good place to live was not simple:

> When I arrived, no one had arranged my housing. At home, a room would simply have been assigned. I got a dorm room by signing a contract. I didn't understand it, just signed it. I found out during finals that I had agreed to leave the dorm for the month of vacation. I had no place to live in December. (Chinese student)
>
> I have to live in the cheap place. I had a house, where my family lived still, and I had to send money home for them to live. Finally I brought them here--it was less expensive that way. (Indian student)

Loneliness and lack of a social network were troublesome:

> I wanted American friends, but it was so hard, at the beginning. I was not good at talking with strangers. I spent time with people I found, whether I liked them or not. (Chinese student)

> I think most of the students feel that way, (wanting to fit in), especially if they are alone. I want to feel accepted in this society, I don't want to be isolated just because I am different. (Malaysian student)

> I thought it would be like home. But, you've got to have friends. I looked around for people--I went to the [sports facility], made friends in my department, went to the international students luncheons every week, took classes for fun at the [college]. (Canadian student)

> I learned that I have no one here and I was completely on my own. So I opened myself to whomever would talk to me. The orientation (for international students) saved me from loneliness, desperation. (Taiwanese student)

> I am married, so it's easier for me. But, Americans aren't real friends. Their talk is superficial, constant small-talk without content. They ask, "how are you?" but your answer has to be Great! or Excellent! They say hi, and keep walking. They don't really have time for you. (Finnish student)

English language proficiency was a common concern:

> You might get an impression that most Asian students don't talk much, the main reason is that they feel inferior to speak in English. Most of us learn English as a second language, or even 3rd, 4th, or 5th. We may [have] different accent and some people might have a difficult timė to understand...we are afraid that people might laugh at our pronunciation. (Malaysian student)

> I expected to have language difficulties. Would I understand? would people understand me? (Chinese, Croatian, German, Mexican students)

And then, the niggling, daily routines challenged their coping abilities:

> The CHOICES! I didn't even know what *sourdough bread* was, so how could I know if I wanted it on my sandwich? And I didn't expect it to be so fast. I couldn't understand what people were asking me--I had to ask them to repeat so many times. (Mexican student)

> I was from a tropical country and 60(F) was considered cold for me...I had a problem differentiating between a dime and a nickel when I wanted to pay for bus fare....I had to adjust to the language....I kept getting lost and spending an hour to

> get to places that were only ten minutes apart. (Malaysian student)
>
> I went to a lunch and there was a cake, I thought, so I cut a piece for myself. At my table, my friends laughed at me and asked me why I had such a big piece of cheese. (Chinese student)
>
> I thought there would be a dress code. I was surprised that people wore their sweats to class, inside out....and they wore underwear on the outside. I couldn't do that. (German student)

The examples, above, provide a sketch of the bulk of the interviews. While the researcher intended to guide the discussions through sojourners' classroom learning experiences, the sojourners wanted to talk about what they had learned, living in the United States on a day to day basis. The discussion that follows addresses this diversion from the research focus.

Discussion

For many of the sojourners in this study, their relocation to the United States was their first time away from the security of home. It can be stressful whenever a child first "leaves home;" leaving home and country increases the stress. In moving to the United States, student sojourners experience multiple losses: family, friends, most of their possessions, culture, status, security, and normative way of life (Grisbacher, 1991). They brought with them some expectations, but little experience in dealing with losses or with such an unfamiliar place. Some eventual disorientation could be viewed as inevitable.

At this Northwest university, student sojourners can attend an orientation program that was developed just for sojourners. Among its offerings is an entertaining, yet serious, presentation on *culture shock*. Oberg (1960) coined the phrase and defined the concept as the "disorientation and accompanying anxiety experienced by sojourners in cross-cultural transition" (p. 273). The sojourners in this study reported that they received the news of their impending disorientation with smiles and some nervousness. The anecdotes that they provided for this study documented some of their actual experiences with culture shock.

Three broad categories of factors can influence the degree of the disorientation: cultural differences, individual differences, and individual experience (Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Grisbacher, 1991; Hannigan, 1990). These categories help to explain the variety of anecdotes that the sojourners offered. Comparisons of their countries and the United States show a range of differences, from similar (Canada and the United States) to disparate (Croatia and the United States). The sojourners themselves represented a range of differences (such as age, travel experience, college experience). Likewise, sojourners' experiences upon arrival in the United States varied (such as whether they fended for themselves or they had friends or acquaintances to help them get settled). The sojourners' descriptions of their experiences varied from comic to tragic.

Sojourners can confront emotional, psychological, social, and academic stressors that can contribute to culture shock. The consequences of culture shock can be mild to severe. Feelings of anxiety, boredom, depression, hostility, frustration, helplessness, isolation, loneliness, nostalgia, dissatisfaction, unhappiness, lost identity, and even poor health can mark its effects (Boyer & Sedlecek, 1988; Church, 1982; Furnham & Bochner, 1982; Ward & Kennedy, 1993). Given this array of possible responses to relocation in a foreign country, the results of this study are hardly surprising. The study asked about the sojourners' academic experiences while the sojourners were still recovering from their initial survival experiences.

Maslow's (1954) "Hierarchy of Needs" contributes to an explanation of this study's results. Maslow conceptualized needs as being sequential. Basic needs (physiological, safety, belonging) must be met before higher needs (esteem, self-actualization) can be addressed. Academic needs belong to the higher needs category. Sojourners had to cope with the basic needs of shelter, food, and safety before they could proceed toward self-actualization. Naturally, then, sojourners had more anecdotes about becoming secure in an unfamiliar country than about having expectations for the classroom.

The sojourners' classroom experiences did provide some data for this study about sojourners' expectations for teachers. Returning to the research questions that prompted this study, some responses can be offered.

Question One

The first research question asked whether student sojourners had articulated expectations for teacher communication. These sojourners had tried to imagine what it would be like in the United States. They had developed expectations for themselves, more than for their future teachers. They worried about whether their English would be adequate, whether people would make fun of their attempts at talking, and whether they would be able to understand teachers and classmates. Sojourners assumed responsibility for their communication and their understanding. They hoped that their teachers would have understanding and flexible attitudes, but did not anticipate that teachers could or would make attempts to be communicatively understandable.

Question Two

The second research question asked if student sojourners had experienced violations of their expectations for teacher communication. Sojourners did remember instances when they felt 'violated.' They more often attributed such feelings to unmet expectations for *self*, or for some *relationship*, than to unmet expectations for teacher communication.

If a violation were related to failing to understand or learn, these student sojourners more likely would blame *themselves* than their teachers. The Malaysian student, for example, saw his grade point average dip down and just assumed that he was "getting stupider." He did not consider the teachers' communication as a factor in his learning. At the *relational* level, if teachers respected the sojourners, other relational expectation violations were tolerated. If respect were missing (such as teachers treating sojourners as deficient, rather than as language-deficient), then the sojourners assessed their feelings of violation as negative. They generally would defer to their teachers'

relational expectations, which affected their relational enjoyment. Sojourners gave teacher-student relationships as much priority as they gave to teacher communication.

One principal violation of expectations for teacher communication was described by these sojourners. It concerned the quality of explicitness. Some of their teachers had failed to make their communication clear, at two levels: (a) form, such as omitting evident transitions, and (b) content, such as omitting information about readings assigned. Sojourners negatively evaluated those teachers' violations and reported that they had difficulty with their studies in those teachers' classes. While this study did not focus on a link between violations of student expectations for teacher communication and student achievement, the sojourners' anecdotes indicated that such a link would be worth future consideration.

Question Three

The third research question asked how student sojourners had responded to violations of their expectations for teacher communication. The sojourners did not allude to teacher communication norms. They did not make any comments about how a teacher *should* communicate. They did report their expectations, based on the media and other sojourners' advice. And, they did report their strategies for coping with perceived violations of expectations. They seemed to be taking a case-by-case approach for assessing teachers and classroom experiences, rather than drawing from a framework of norms, expectations, and guidelines for evaluating violations of expectations.

None of the sojourners reported talking with any teacher about communication. Rarely did a sojourner go to a teacher for clarification of course-content. Sojourners primarily depended upon one another to cope with problems, including violations of communication expectations in the classroom.

Within and outside of the classroom, sojourners reported resorting to a strategy of "change." Sojourners felt that THEY needed to assimilate--to adapt to teachers (and others). They changed their own behaviors and perhaps even their values, as reported by

the Malaysian sojourner. These sojourners coped by trying to meet the demands placed on them and by changing to become more like United States people.

Summary

This study did not provide the anticipated data for addressing a question of shared norms in relation to sojourner students' expectations for teacher communication and experienced expectation violations. The information that these sojourners offered did provides some insights, however. More importantly, these sojourners provided some guidelines for future research.

Implications

Student sojourners' expectations did play a role in their experiences in the United States. However, it was not their expectations for teacher communication that were critical. Their crucial expectations centered around being guest-members of many inter-related contexts. Sojourners' eventual positive outcomes in a classroom context might depend upon their feeling 'secure' in home and social contexts. Additional contexts might be investigated for relevance: work, religious, sports, or hobbies. Compensating for sojourners' many losses, and helping them fit into their multiple contexts, seem to be preliminary stages in a long-term process of achieving academic gains.

Future research could investigate the relationships among 'secured contexts,' by addressing multiple contexts in tandem. Reaching student sojourners when they are actually in those contexts would add to the reliability of data: a) data could be compared within some time-frame, across contexts, and b) multiple data sources could contribute to knowledge of sojourner expectations and outcomes (sojourners' accounts, teachers' accounts, fellow sojourners' accounts, researchers' observations).

Future research should also address an epistemological issue clearly highlighted by this exploratory study. Researchers can study extant research, come to logically supported conclusions about *Problems That Need Investigating*, and design and conduct research based on researcher conclusions. Alternately, researchers can go out in the

field, ask people about the problems that concern them, help investigate those problems, and contribute to the resolution of those problems. The alternative approach falls under a critical research paradigm.

Allen (1993) characterizes critical science as one that aims to offer solutions to existing problems. He contrasts traditional and critical science and asserts that the key difference between them lies "less in how facts are established than in why they are established and how they are interpreted" (p. 202). Traditional science gives a researcher the power to determine research questions, method, and interpretations of results. Critical science would allow the power to be shared between a researcher and those being researched. Traditional science encompasses research that is instigated by a researcher and that concerns phenomena of interest to a researcher. Critical science encompasses research that responds to lay-persons' reports of problems and that aims to resolves such problems.

Sprague (1992) calls for the application of a critical approach to educational research, which she describes as follows:

> The critical paradigm, then, is not characterized by a research method so much as by a point of view. Critical scholars might use various methods from any research tradition to gather data. What characterizes their work is a militant awareness of the reflexive nature of any scholarship that deals with human affairs and a set of assumptions about the purpose of inquiry (p. 3).

A critical research paradigm holds a researcher accountable for all facets of research, from identifying a research question to utilizing research outcomes. Critical reflexiveness does not mean asking if a *researcher* is satisfied with her/his research; rather, it means asking if a researcher has met her/his responsibilities related to social, moral, or political issues. A critical paradigm assumes that research should provide options for improving social, moral, or political conditions.

The study reported here proposed to investigate the relevance of a communication theory (expectancy) to sojourner students' classroom experiences. An eventual goal of such research would be to improve sojourner students' learning. This study aptly focused on the unique expectations of sojourner students, but it lacked a preliminary consultation with sojourners about their unique concerns. A critical paradigm would stipulate such preliminary consultation. Citing Bochner, Sprague writes:

> Grounded on the premises that social knowledge is historically situated and may be conditioned by the hegemony of vested interests, the critical approach seeks enlightenment and emancipation through the rational investigation of alternative descriptions of reality (p. 3).

The ideas of a researcher provide but one description of reality; the ideas of the researched provide another.

The participants in this study clearly had their own concerns and their concerns did not match particularly those of the researcher. Instructional communication research with students, from the United States or abroad, should account for the students in addition to accounting for teachers. In particular, this research should focus on students' concerns, particularly when student learning outcomes are considered.

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